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ABSTRACT

Twenty-five teachers enrolled in a 5-week summer practicum course on reading assessment. Every day the teachers attended class and worked one-on-one with a child having learning difficulties. Teachers maintained extensive records of their instruction and also corresponded with the professor via dialogue journals. A study examined these instructional records and dialogue journals to understand teacher use of dialogue journals, the relationship between journal entries and instructional patterns, and the influence of the university educator on teacher change. Results revealed a number of patterns, including the following: (1) teachers had distinctive response styles (narrative and intertextual) that were consistent over the 5 weeks (interaction with the professor did not seem to affect this style); (2) teachers with a narrative response style tended to want to "fix" a child's problems, while teachers with an intertextual response style tended to focus on understanding a child as learner; and (3) teachers with an intertextual response style wrote more about their own learning and reported that they knew more about teaching and learning as a result of the course. (One figure of data is included, and 23 references are attached. Three appendixes containing outlines of response styles are attached.) (Author/SR)

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CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF READING

Technical Report No. 514

EXPLORATIONS IN REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

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September 1990

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Abstract

Twenty-five teachers enrolled in a five-week-long summer practicum course. Every day the teachers attended class and worked one-on-one with a child having learning difficulties. Teachers maintained extensive records of their instruction and also corresponded with the professor via dialogue journals. In this study, these instructional records and dialogue journals were examined in order to understand teacher use of dialogue journals, the relationship between journal entries and instructional patterns, and the influence of the university educator on teacher change.

Results revealed a number of patterns, including the following: (a) Teachers had distinctive response styles--narrative and intertextual--that were consistent over the five weeks. Interaction with the professor did not seem to affect this style. (b) Teachers with a narrative response style tended to want to "fix" a child's problems; teachers with an intertextual response style tended to focus on understanding a child as learner. and (c) Teachers with an intertextual response style wrote more about their own learning and reported that they knew more about teaching and learning as a result of the course.

EXPLORATIONS IN REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Currently many educators are calling for teachers to be "reflective practitioners" (Calderhead, 1988; Noffke & Brennan, 1988), to engage in "action research" (Bissex & Bullock, 1987; Boomer, 1987; Goswami & Stillman, 1987; Newkirk & Atwell, 1986), and to otherwise function as decision makers in their classrooms (Berthoff, 1987; Dillon, 1987; Hansen, Newkirk, & Graves, 1985; Lester & Mayher, 1987; Newman, 1987). However, the role of teacher education relative to the call for reflective practitioners is not clear. What role can and should university preservice and inservice classes play in creating reflective practitioners? Are students and teachers enrolled in university courses already reflective practitioners? Can participation in teacher education classes influence the tendency to be reflective? Should the university take on this responsibility? This study addresses some of these issues.

Participants were 25 teachers enrolled in a five-week-long reading assessment course. The class met for 2 1/2 hours a day for 25 days during the summer. In addition, each teacher spent one hour a day with a child who had been referred to a university reading clinic. The teachers and the professor had the opportunity to interact during class and before and after the tutoring sessions. In addition, they corresponded several times a week with each other via dialogue journals. The professor (the first author) believed that she had built the opportunity for reflection into each of these experiences and that an examination of the dialogue journals might shed light on the role of inservice teacher education courses as they relate to reflective practice. The purpose of this study was to examine (a) how teachers use dialogue journals, (b) the influences of inservice education classes the journals might document, and (c) the relationship between patterns in dialogue journals and instructional practices.

Dialogue Journals

Staton (1983) defines dialogue journals as "functional, interactive communication, about self-generated (instead of teacher dictated) topics, [which] is cumulative over extended periods of time in a shared context" (p. 3) and suggests that dialogue journals provide an opportunity to access "the acquisition of reasoning and self-knowledge" (p. 6). There has been, however, a limited amount of research on the role of dialogue journals in preservice and inservice education classes. Most of this research has involved elementary and high school students and has focused on developing writing competence (Britton, 1987; Dooley, 1987; Peyton & Seyoum, 1989; Reed & Peyton, 1987; Staton, 1983). Content analysis of dialogue journals of pre-service teachers by Barbour and Holmes (1987) showed that teachers-in-training spend more time thinking about affective aspects of teaching than the cognitive aspects. Yinger and Clark (1985) noted that journal writing was a valuable planning and teaching tool for many teachers. Bixby (1989) found that students evidenced six distinctive modes of discussion in their journals: recording, conversing, reflecting, working through disjunctions, deciding, and adopting a different stance to understand their experience from a different perspective. Newman (1987) reported that journals were a useful tool to help teachers understand language and learn about their role as teachers. However, none of these studies considers change over time, nor, because teaching patterns were not simultaneously analyzed, were the relationships between the responses in the dialogue journals and teaching practices a part of the analyses.

Method

Twenty-five teachers enrolled in a reading assessment class (8 students one summer and 17 another summer) maintained daily dialogue journals with their professor. These journals represented a "conversation on paper" with respect to the course requirements. Information about these journals was provided in the course syllabus:

> Dialogue journal. Purchase a bound journal (not looseleaf or spiral bound) to use as a dialogue journal. (The bookstore has ones that have black 'marbled' covers.) Turn the journal into me by 4:30 every other day. It will be returned to you, with my comments, by class the next day. This journal is expected to constitute an on-going dialogue between student and professor. Topics to be discussed in this manner include, but are not limited to, readings, tutoring, and class requirements. The journal is my means of providing each of you with an opportunity to talk with me several times weekly.

The professor had used dialogue journals in other classes and hoped that teachers would use the journals in this class to record their thoughts and reflections on the reading they were doing for class, to discuss their case study child, to raise hypotheses relative to assessment, and to ask questions. She intended to use the information gained from these journals to inform the curricular decisions she made relative to whole class meetings. She also expected to teach through the responses she made to journal entries. The journals then were primarily used by the instructor to inform her teaching, both in the large group and in the journals.

In addition to attending class, the teachers spent 20 hours (one hour a day for 20 of the 25 class days) working one on one with children who had been identified as "at risk" for reading failure. The professor emphasized to the teachers that their goal was to learn about the child as reader, writer, and learner so that curricular decisions could be grounded in that knowledge base. She also explained that the time with the child was to be spent pleasantly engaged in literacy experiences. "Tutors," for example, might read with children, investigate topics of interest, write together, and so forth.

Teachers documented their curricular decision making using a strategy called "Hypothesis Test" (H-T) (Stephens, 1990). An example of an H-T sheet is shown in Figure 1.

[Insert Figure 1 about here.]

On these H-T sheets, teachers were asked to make explicit the emerging questions that drove each session's instruction and observations. They recorded hypotheses about the child's reading or reading behavior (column 1), activities they had planned for the day that addressed the hypotheses they made (column 2), observations made during the instructional session (column 3) and, in column 4, considered the implications of the day's learning experiences. They then decided whether the insights gained through reflection confirmed or counteracted their initial hypotheses. Revised hypotheses were then entered in column 1 for the next day's session and instructional decisions for that day were based on the latest set of hypotheses held by the teacher.

For example, after reading the background information gathered on one child, a teacher might wonder if the child had developed a variety of strategies for comprehending text. This would be entered in column 1, along with other possible hypotheses. The teacher would enter her statements as hypotheses ("The student might not have developed a variety of strategies for comprehending text") or questions ("Has this student developed a variety . . .?"). She would then record the instructional decisions she made that would enable her to explore hypotheses. In this case, the teacher might decide to read to the child and then to have the child choose a book to read to her. The teacher might use Miscue Analysis (Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 1987) or Running Records (Clay, 1985) to examine oral reading strategies. She would record observations ("John read slowly, sounding out each letter. Often what he read did not make sense. He did not spontaneously self-correct. No other reading strategies were observed.") Next, the teacher would record her reflections on the H-T sheet, offering possible interpretations and revising original hypotheses ("So far, it seems that John over-relies on sounding out and that he does not use other language cues."). In this example, the teacher would most likely carry her hypotheses forward another day, designing activities for the second day that would facilitate further exploration of her "limited strategies" hypothesis.

The professor expected that this H-T process would be informed by the class discussions, the readings, and the interactions in the dialogue journals.

Analysis

Dialogue Journals

Journals from the smaller class (8 students) were analyzed first. Two of the students (both of whom were noneducation majors taking the course to meet elective requirements in another program) requested that their journals not be included in this study. One parent requested that her child's records not be used. Therefore, only five sets of data were analyzed initially. The other journal (for which instructional records were not available for analysis) was used to confirm the categories that had emerged in the other five journals.

We began the analysis by reading through all of the journals to get a general sense of the dialogues between professor and students. We then reread the journals and began to classify the responses. The instructor's stated intent was to encourage the teachers to reflect on their readings, class discussions, and engagement with their case study child. Her response pattern was consistent across all journals. She sequentially responded to each point the teacher had made (at times on the facing page or in the margin beside the teacher's writing) with an affirming comment first, and then usually a question, comment, or suggestion of further reading:

> 7/1/87
>
> Diane -
> In the first chapter of Reading Without Nonsense Smith talks about making sense of reading. If a reader has no experience with what information he's reading, then he won't be able to understand what he's read.
>
> I know what he means. I have just read the first 40 pages of [the book for the] research class in 2 hours and I can't make sense of the material. I am too concerned with memory and recall. My comprehension is shot to hell. But how can I relax and enjoy Research as Smith suggests?
>
> But the attitude of Smith has helped me to enjoy the reading for Diagnosis class.
>
> Teachers do not understand the relationship between language and reading. After Jones' language class I understood how important language acquisition could be in the reading process. Smith also makes the point.
>
> But what will all this information do for my own children? My 5 year old starts kindergarten in the fall. Can I help facilitate her "learning"?
>
> The teaching methods introduced in our text is so exciting and unstructured. I love it. But am I brave enough to try them?
>
> Anna

7/2/87

Anna,
I liked how you make the relationship between Smith and yourself in the research course. I firmly believe that making connections makes all the difference re: learning anything.

I am not sure how you can relax and enjoy Research! Or rather, the research text. I think maybe having to read books like that falls in the category of unnatural events. I call those books "college basals" and quote someone who said people shouldn't have to read a book that no one would give as a Christmas present!

Glad that you are enjoying the reading for this class!

I agree that many do not understand the relationship between reading and language. However, having had Jones' class, I think you'll find Smith pretty smooth sailing.

As to your 5 year old, I'd strongly recommend Meek. It's written for parents and I think you'd find it useful both as a parent and as a teacher.

As to the "unstructured," yes, you are right, but they are also highly organized, and that provides some comfort.

Any progress/change is hard, but only if fear stands in your way.

You'll probably reach the point that you are willing to take the risk. After all, look how many of us are here to help!

Diane

Each journal was reread at least five times and categories related to teachers' responses were refined with each rereading until we felt that the categories aptly captured the dialogic process. The categorization scheme for teacher entries follows:

Categorization Scheme for Teacher Entries in Dialogue Journals:

1. Text related--any comments which related to the readings the teachers did during the course.

    a. summarizes text content
    b. comments on text content
    c. connects reading to the child s/he is tutoring
    d. connects reading to her/his own classroom, previous experience or an experience anticipated in the future

2. Teaching

    a. tells--literally recounts events that happened in the teaching setting
    b. observes--comments on occurrences or interactions with the child while teaching
    c. interprets--analyzes child's abilities or makes judgments about activities or child's abilities
    d. hypothesizes--raises possibilities about the H-T process, "I wonder if . . ."
    e. instructs--shares/reveals instructional decisions

3. Planning

    a. discusses plans based on observation of the child in the tutoring session
    b. discusses plans that were determined independent of the tutoring session

4. Self as learner

    a. reflects uneasiness/confidence about self
    b. provides background information about training or experiences
    c. reflects on the learning process s/he has undertaken
    d. reflects on own knowledge about reading or assessment

5. Talk about . . .

    a. class--includes references to issues or topics discussed in class, reflections on comments made in class, and questions or comments about class procedure or expectations.
    b. journal--talk about the journal as a tool for thinking and reflection, questions or comments about journal procedure.
    c. assessment--discussions of assessments used with children.

We noted two other categories of remarks: (a) procedural comments or questions ("I've used this space to organize my thoughts about what I've read. Is that O.K. at times?"); and (b) personal talk ("By the way, what kind of sailboat do you have?"). These categories did not yield insights into teacher decision making, so they were omitted from the final analyses. Each teacher's journal was coded using the five categories, and charts were made that synthesized each coded remark by date of journal entry (See Appendix A for sample patterns--not content--of teacher response, by category).

After the journals were coded and charted, patterns within teachers and across teachers were analyzed. We used the sixth teacher's journal to make sure there were no additional categories or patterns that should be considered and to check that the categories and patterns that had already been established were trustworthy enough to use in the forthcoming analysis of the journals from the second class. We next categorized and identified patterns in the journals from the seven sets of data available from the second class.

Hypothesis-Test Sheets

There were four columns on each H-T sheet: hypotheses, curricular decisions, observations, and interpretations, and teachers consistently made entries in all four columns. To identify patterns in this data, we first coded all comments as Hypothesis (H), Curricular Decision (CD), Observation (O), Interpretation (I), Statement (S), Conclusion (C), or Question (Q). These codes were used independent of the placement of the remark on the page. For example, the remark "At first Melissa saw no purpose for writing the letters on the cards, but when we began the game she saw the reason why the letters needed to match on the set of cards" was coded O (Observation) even though the teacher had placed the remark in the Interpretation column of the H-T sheet. Examples of each category follow.

> **Hypothesis**: "Auditory processing problem either due to: -hearing? -auditory memory? --consciously tunes out when socially incorrect or when too much stimuli?" (Elizabeth, 7/8/88)
>
> **Curricular decision**: "Write a story to go along with the pictures he brings from home." (Judith, 7/7/87)
>
> **Observation**: "He gave up when I insisted he could spell on his own - g, y, and j seem to be the favorite letters to use today. In fact, y often seems to represent the vowel sound. (Margaret, 7/11/88)
>
> **Interpretation**: "Cortney does not appear to enjoy situations where he has to read or write. Wants to control situation and jump from task to task. (Laura, 7/10/87)
>
> **Statement**: "Remains avoidant of printed materials." (Jo, 7/22/87)
>
> **Conclusion**: "Melissa still doesn't take risks involving reading independently. Melissa still doesn't have an interest in reading books in the lab. Doesn't want to take the risks." (Jessica, 7/7/88)
>
> **Question**: "What kind of decoding strategies does she have?" (Amy, 7/7/88)

We then attempted to trace the relationship between statements made in each column. If, for example, it was apparent that a particular hypothesis in column 1 lead to a curricular decision in column 2, a line was drawn connecting the two comment codes. This continued across the sheet: if an observation from column 3 stemmed from a curricular decision in column 2, a line was drawn to make the relationship clear, and if an interpretation was based on an observation, again a line was drawn. If the teacher seemed to be making a connection between two columns that did not seem to the coder to be appropriate, it was also noted. (See examples in Appendix B.)

The first set of H-T sheets was coded by both authors to confirm that we shared a clear definition of each of the categories of comments that had emerged. The remaining H-T sheets were then coded, and patterns within teachers and across teachers analyzed.

Patterns in the Data

In our search for patterns in the data, we noticed that most teachers were unfamiliar with the collegial approach of the professor. We also noted that, as a result of the course, the teachers began to rethink their role as teachers. Within these similarities we also found that teachers differed in (a) the focus of their writing, (b) response styles, and (c) approaches to the case study experience.

Reactions to the Collegial Approach

Writing in a dialogue journal--having a "conversation" with the professor--seemed to be a new experience for most of the teachers. Some of them reported feeling awkward initially, saying that they were not sure what they were to write about, but within three entries, most seemed to be quite comfortable having defined for themselves what the role of the journal would be. In addition, though told that their dialogue journals were to be a conversation, teachers seemed genuinely surprised to find that the journals were not used for evaluation or for reinforcing a hierarchy--with the professor telling them what was right or wrong--but that it was an interchange between two colleagues:

> I would like to plan for another course under you--not under but with you. Being in the early childhood program and seeing the wonders worked here this summer has made me realize I can make a big difference and if it has been only in one child this summer--think what I can do in years to come!
>
> Jo 7/29/87

Teachers also noted that this was the first time they felt their agenda was part of what was to be discussed and addressed in the course:

> Usually the course is all laid out and there is not much left up to the individual, but to do the work. It has been most interesting to "live with myself" this session and survive.
>
> Geri 7/23/87

Similarly, teachers seemed surprised by how much they read when it was their choice to do so:

> I can say definitely, that I've rarely been so motivated to read class texts. Maybe some of it had to do with the fact I knew I didn't have to memorize it all for an exam (okay, maybe more than "some"). But really, I think the whole course was just set up to want to learn. I read three books and still really want to read Margaret Meek, Learning to Read.
>
> Tracy 7/29/87

Perceptions of the Role of Teacher

Most of the teachers seemed to consider or reconsider their role as teachers. Some explicitly talked about their practices, shared what they believed about teaching and learning, and noted how they wanted to alter their teaching style. Others made no explicit mention of the process of self-examination, but it was clear that they were thinking about their role as teachers as they wrote about reading, their students, or class:

> My role is changing. I am not responsible to "teach" Steve . . . I am here to help guide and enrich his learning. He too must take on some responsibility for learning.
>
> Anna 7/2/87

> I feel real success with Dan, but sometimes I feel like I don't know what I am doing, well, more a feeling that I am not qualified, but I really do see what some of his "problems" are . . . I enjoyed class today. It is nice to bounce ideas off a small group and then see them reflected in the whole class. I see we all have the same misgivings about things. People in here really have opened up. I like being able to get ideas from ideas from ideas . . . Back to Dan. His parents talk to me every day when they come to pick him up . . . Maybe that's where I worry. Shoot, this is all so new to me. It's like I've forgotten all my teacher's strategies and feeling of 'worth' and have relegated myself to 'student status.' Ahh, the teacher as student as teacher ad infinitum. I think I'll concentrate on my successes instead of my misgivings.
>
> Judith 7/8/87

This reflection on themselves as teachers was not confined to the lab experience:

> You know, it feels so good to find things relevant to everyday life from the learning of class. Listening to my 3 1/2 year old daughter 'read' a book to me or just to herself is so impressive. I just gloat in her accomplishments. When we work at the computer at the public library I find myself giving her more time finding answers. I look for her strategies, not for corrective purposes, but just to understand her more.
>
> Anna 7/25/87

> By applying the standards of my own reading to my students I can accept some of their strategies for reading. The main change will come during reading group. I have enough confidence in myself as a teacher from curriculum class and diagnosis class to form my own strategies for reading. I don't have to read from the basal teacher's manual word for word. I know enough to try a few things differently.
>
> 1) Don't make a child read out loud any material he hasn't had a chance to read earlier silently.
>
> 2) Let the children chose the unknown and unfamiliar words from the basal story.
>
> 3) Let the children finish story before comprehension questions are asked.
>
> 4) Change form of questions to open-ended not 'yes' or 'no' answers.
>
> 5) Give the children a chance to reflect on the story with their own thoughts and opinions. Who's to say the teacher knows everything.
>
> Anna 7/27/87

In Appendix C, we have provided excerpts from Laura's journal over the semester to show how these kinds of remarks were embedded in the context of the journal conversations.

Focus of the Writing

The focus of each teacher's writing tended to be consistent throughout the course. Some spent most of their journal reflecting on what was occurring with their case study student. Others wrote most about their reading, the class sessions, or themselves. For example, near the beginning of the course Florence wrote the most in her dialogue journal about her case study child and that seemed to be her central focus throughout:

> He verbalized now that he can skip a word that he doesn't know but it stops there. He guesses the meaning and may be close so now we need to work on context with the looks of the word or initial consonant match.
>
> Florence 7/13/87

> Adam is picking up strategies one by one, and verbalizing them first so we're now working on actually using them. It's great to see progress.
>
> Florence 7/15/87

> He seems to be more relaxed and comfortable in Lab and that seems to be making him less cooperative to "my plans." He's changing plans, or trying to, and feeling freer to do more.
>
> Florence 7/16/87

Others used the journal to think beyond the time-frame of the course:

> I can't remember not being able to read. Must be like going to a foreign country and trying to read signs--"Greek to me." I am beginning to understand a little more about how hard a time non-English speakers have with learning to read/comprehend English. Poor Ngoc (one of my Cambodian students) all of my "quizzes" must have been Greek. Wish I could have helped him more with reading. Well, that is what I am here for.
>
> Judith 6/30/87

> It's only Monday and I am beat. I feel real success with Dan, but sometimes I feel like I don't know what I am doing, well, more a feeling that I am not qualified, but I really do see what some of his "problems" are. It seems to me that most of it is emotional . . . When it comes to getting it all recorded . . . well, I hope I'm getting better.
>
> Judith 7/13/87

> Felt improductive with Dan today. I talked to Julie about things. She helped me to see things in a different light, recognize advances etc. This being a student is tough. Got to get better. I relaxed this weekend by reading the end of Lessons from a Child. Whew, what a great experience that sounded like. I can only hope for such success in the future. I've copied some sections to send back to my friends on the faculty in Hawaii. Hope it'll help. I enjoyed class today--talking with new people. Nice to hear the experiences and grow kind of sideways--with and through them in class.
>
> Judith 7/20/87

Laura was the only teacher whose focus was not consistent. She initially wrote about her teaching and her own learning and planning. However, part way through the class, she wrote in her journal that she was noticing other teachers were writing about their reading and she wasn't doing that. From that day on, she included some comments about the reading she had been doing in her journal reflection.

Response Style

Early in our analysis of the dialogue journals and H-T sheets, it became apparent that the teachers had distinctive response styles that remained consistent over the five weeks. In their journals, some teachers tended to report, to tell what had happened; others not only told, but shared their thoughts and reactions to what had occurred. In so doing they made explicit the connections that they were making between themselves and the events that occurred. Similarly, on the H-T sheets, some teachers reported discrete pieces of information while others made links across events. We called these styles narrative and intertextual. These styles were foreshadowed by the first journal entries:

> Jessica 6/28/88 (Narrative response style)
>
> The message that I'm receiving from Whole Language: Theory in Use is that in order for language learning to occur it must be done in an environment that encourages sharing, risk taking, choice making. The teacher must be supportive and "lead from behind."
>
> I had to pull myself through this reading. Probably because it was the last article I read and that it was so hot in my apartment. I want one more month with a low electric bill.
>
> Reading: What Matters? Easy, interesting, entertaining and yet informative reading. Nice illustrative examples.
>
> This class will definitely keep me on my toes and keep my mind going. Good job. I've used this space to organize my thoughts about what I've read. Is that O.K. at times?
>
> . . . The first thing Ashley and I did was get to know each other. She brought in some books that she had previously checked out and she told me what her favorite ones were. Her favorites were the "easy" ones. She showed me her handwriting by answering some questions. She made sure that I knew that a peer had told her that she wrote like a baby. Spelling and generating her own ideas were not things that Ashley was willing to take a risk with . . . .
>
> Amy 6/29/88 (Intertextual response style)
>
> I was thinking about Amy, the reader, last night and my thought constantly went back to my childhood. Edith served as a grandmother for me. She lived across the street, taught first grade and made wonderful cookies. Her door and heart were always open. We read to each other by the hour--even before I could "formally" read. I could actually make her better when she didn't feel well simply by reading. The stories could be Dick and Jane or something far more "sophisticated" but whatever it was-- it was special. She read stories of brownies and fairies. I can close my eyes and still feel the brownies' footsteps on my leg or fairy wings against my cheeks. What a wonderful way to grow up. (The only time we didn't read was when we listened to the live broadcasts from the Met on Saturday afternoon--I still hate opera!)

> Last week I drove to New Jersey and went to see Edith. She'll be 90 in September and has forgotten so much of her wonderful past, but she didn't forget to ask if I read daily; she didn't forget to remind me to read to my school children daily; and she didn't forget to remind me to listen to children read--"even if they don't know the words." What a wonderful intro to 535.

Response style: Narrative. Thirteen complete sets of teacher and case study student data were analyzed. Four of the 13 teachers predominately used the journal to tell about their readings, their outside assignments and their tutoring experiences. These teachers tended to keep information discrete. While they might, for example, comment on the usefulness or helpfulness of the ideas inside the text (e.g., Jessica's "easy, interesting, entertaining, and yet informative"), they rarely mentioned how the text changed their thinking, influenced their practice, or altered their philosophy. Teachers with a narrative response style also tended to see the communication in the journals as being more one-way; they seemed to either be writing for themselves or for the professor, rather than engaging in a collegial exchange or conversation.

Jessica, for example, had a narrative style. She often took the assignments very literally and specifically supplied requested information, observations or writing: "I read Jean Clyde's article on written conversation this weekend. It was very helpful." (Jessica, 7/11). Margaret was also a teacher who tended to report. In her journal, she first explained what she had been doing with her case-study child, frequently adding "editorial comments" about the readings or about what had occurred in the class:

> Re: books and why I didn't buy two of them. Meeks--I guess because it was written for parents and I am one and have gone through 18 years of parenting and know parents should share oral and written language with their kids and really didn't want to hear about parents as I hear about parents all the time as a Special Ed teacher
> . . .
>
> Seeing for ourselves . . . I really dislike reading about what teachers have done as research. It goes back to a U of Wisconsin course in which one text was full of research notes--BORING! See I didn't even look in the book (just like the kids)! I used to be in research projects and know how subjects are chosen or left out. I also do better when I can hear about them first hand and can ask questions.
>
> Margaret, 7/5/88

Teachers with a narrative response style used their H-T sheets to "tell" what was happening in their tutoring experiences. Again, information seemed to be kept discrete. Information from readings did not seem to inform questions asked about the case study child. There did not seem to be a consistent link between observations, interpretations and hypotheses. Indeed, hypotheses sometimes "appeared" without the reader seeming to understand the observations on which they were based. Concerns, once mentioned, did not seem to reoccur or to be followed up. Implications or observations were not discussed:

> Handwriting was very frustrating for Melissa today. Most of our reading is shared by reading words together or by sharing pages. To be successful she really needs the very easy books.
>
> Jessica, 7/13/88

> Jeff is dependent on me to write for him. He begs me to write things--so no risks are taken. I must change this.
>
> Margaret, 7/14/88

Response Style: Intertextual. The other nine teachers not only talked about what had been happening, but also shared what affect the course and readings were having on how they were viewing themselves as teachers and children as learners. They used the journals to establish and maintain two way communication, a conversation with the professor. Texts, class discussions, and teaching experiences in and outside the tutoring experience became woven into the conversation.

> About the Newman and Toomes articles, you asked what specifically I found useful? Well both of these articles have altered my beliefs and strategies in working with students in content areas of reading. For instance, it seems so much less important that students read correctly word for word than for them to get the meaning from what they read. (Seems simple, huh? Not to me.)
>
> Oftentimes in my classes I would avoid dealing with students' obvious reading problems for fear of making things worse. I figured my knowledge of how to help them was so little, it could only make the situation worse. I feel a bit more confident, though, realizing I still have a ways to go.
>
> I found it useful to read how both articles drew particular conclusions about children's reading abilities based on their oral reading. For instance, the ability to identify what strategies children use in reading seems to be so useful. Yet this is something I had never heard of before. When you think about it, we have strategies for studying (I realized this), and for writing (I realized this), but I had never thought to look at reading that way. Probably an avoidance to something I knew so little about. I think perhaps that is one of the greatest things I will take from these articles and this class--the confidence to address children's reading problems and help them to deal with it.
>
> Kristine, 6/30/88

> Jan's article was impressive. Her five points are ones that we regular classroom teachers forget far too often. We lose sight of language and reading to teach LANGUAGE AND READING. What a waste of so much time that we keep saying we don't have.
>
> Amy, 6/30/88

> I know I've exchanged reading for READING far too many times and I don't know why. It certainly isn't a commitment to the reading program. Maybe I've got CAT fever and fear that I might miss a skill.
>
> Amy, 7/5/88

When reading the texts, teachers with an intertextual style seemed personally engaged. They used the text as yet another chance for dialogue with themselves and the instructor about what they were thinking about their teaching and their child's learning. Rather than commenting on what the author had said, they often commented on how the author's ideas affected or changed their ideas.

> I finished Calkins. Enjoyed it but am anxious to get on with Atwell to see how to set up a writing workshop and how to bring grades into this. I did like the way the teachers cooperated in Calkins--do hope I can have a similar experience with any co-workers at my school. It's really exciting to think about setting this up for my fifth graders. It will take them a while to get used to my new feelings about teaching. They may think I'm "nuts" when I tell them that their spelling is not important on drafts!
>
> Geri 7/23/87

Teachers with interactive response styles used their personal experiences as learners to help with their teaching:

> [Dan] has no idea how to organize his plans. Trial and error is like running into a brick wall over and over. You either fall down or the wall breaks. I know what always happens to me (my aching head). I think I need to approach it from a new angle. Show him you can build steps to get over the wall, or pole vault, or go around it . . . He's so used to being given worksheets, word lists, etc. It's tough to think.
>
> Judith 7/22/87

> As I self-monitor my own reading behavior--especially when reading out loud with Sara, I noticed that I substitute or rearrange phrases (as I would say them)--not surprising. Can I point that out by asking if she noticed it? Explaining that it's O.K. with me and for her, too! Boy, this is complicated!
>
> As I think about today, it feels good to write it out. I am a very tactile learner and thinker. (Maybe Sara is too?)
>
> Elizabeth 7/8/88

In their writing, teachers with this intertextual response style looked critically at themselves and explicitly addressed what they wanted to change. They also appeared more willing to live with the "messiness" of change than teachers with other response styles:

> I always find classes frustrating when I think I know what I'm doing and then realize I don't. I suppose that frustration is typical of many students as well. So often they give up trying to learn at that point. At least I never seem to do that.
>
> Candace 7/87

On their H-T sheets, teachers with a reflective style made more links between hypotheses, observations, and interpretations and curricular decisions than did teachers with a narrative style.

> Does he know all the letters to help him with the first sound in the word? Does he focus on whether the text is making sense? Does he use cues flexibly?
>
> Michelle 7/87

> What are some examples of books Tamika could read and still be successful with but would pose more of a challenge to him (more learning would occur)?
>
> Tracy 7/87

Approach to Task

Teachers predominately took one of two approaches to the case study experience: fix the child's problem(s) or investigate the situation. Margaret, for example, seemed to feel that it was her responsibility to "fix" what was wrong with Jeff. In her journal and on her H-T sheet, she talked about the problems that Jeff had and reported her attempts to change Jeff so that he wouldn't have reading problems:

> Steve is really dependent on me to write for him. He begs me to write things--so no risks are taken. I must change this.
>
> Margaret 7/14/88

Jessica also took a "fix-it" approach, often referring to what Melissa "needed." Jessica seemed to feel that if she could supply what Melissa needed, all would be well:

> Just looking at Melissa come through the door this morning I could tell that she was very proud of her cooking venture with her mom. The success is exactly what Melissa needs to encourage her in reading adventures . . . We decided to make clay. She wrote a shopping list. She also understood that print in recipes was precise and that you needed to follow the directions. With the finished product, Melissa again beamed with pride. High success really gets her going.
>
> Jessica 7/18/88

On the other hand, other teachers seemed to view their tasks as an investigation. Elizabeth's remarks suggested that she wanted to find out what was causing problems for Sara and then use that information to help Sara improve her own reading. From Elizabeth's perspective, the teacher was a detective trying to understand what might be at the center of the child's problem and, as such, she relied on her data from Sara as the source of clues. In her interactions with Sara, as well as in her reflections about those events, she seemed to search for the source of Sara's difficulties, rather than to detail the symptoms:

> Non-attending to stimuli (auditory) is (including phonetic skills):
>
> -because of current hearing loss?
> -missed key instructional sequences during documented hearing losses?
> -awareness of inability to correctly react to complex conversation? or
> -at least an established behavior pattern due to past inadequacies.
>
> Elizabeth 7/13/88

While Amy's approach was similar to Elizabeth's, Loreal's affective behaviors presented a challenge and Amy often had to work through behavior problems before resuming an investigative stance. In spite of these difficulties, Amy still consistently based her curricular decisions and interpretations on Loreal's verbal and non-verbal cues:

> Rainbow drawing . . . hurried through even though she wanted it neat. Kept watching door--tired? Go home?
>
> Amy 7/20/88

Relationships Among Patterns

As the teacher dialogue journals and H-T sheets were reviewed, it became clear there were relationships between the patterns teachers evidenced. First, teachers who made more intertextual ties tended to spend more time writing about themselves as students. They discussed ways that they saw themselves learning as well as ways they saw their case study student learning. They reported that they knew more about teaching and learning as a result of the course.

> I've gone from panic, to bewilderment, to understanding, to bewilderment, and back to understanding. On a given day, I could feel total inadequacy followed by true understanding . . . so what did I learn? I've learned a whole new way of thinking and that ain't bad for one month's efforts. I sit here and wish I could recall some of my children so we could start fresh. I don't have all the answers but I could have been so much more useful to them. I look to the future and see no more dead ends.
>
> Amy 7/28/88

On the other hand, those who did not document reflections on their own learning or the learning of their child appeared less responsive to new ideas, to alternative hypotheses, or to changing their stance on issues with which they were presented. They tended to look to the professor as a resource for materials, but not necessarily new theories or new ways to approach teaching or learning. They also tended to make quick decisions about the child's problems, and then requested materials to "fix" the child's problems.

Second, teachers with an intertextual response style reported investigating a greater number of hypotheses until they reached a conclusion that could be used as a framework for understanding the child's learning problems. Through this process, they gained new understandings about the student that were genuinely helpful in making instructional recommendations to the parent and to the school. Elizabeth, for example, eventually found out that Sara had a succession of ear infections that had not been reported or treated. Many of her reading difficulties seemed to be related to her current and previous hearing loss. Teachers with a narrative response style tended to investigate fewer hypotheses and often drew conclusions about the child's problems within the first few sessions. Jessica's conclusions, reported to the parent at the end of the five weeks, for example, paralleled the information provided by the school and were nearly identical to the remarks she made to the instructor during the first week of class.

These relationships coupled with the patterns discussed earlier gave us a way to talk about the value judgments we saw ourselves making as we read, categorized, and looked for patterns in these documents. In other ways, we found a way to "see" our subjectivity (Peshkin, 1988). We came to understand that for us "good" meant (a) making connections between and among experiences, (b) an attitude of inquiry, (c) a commitment to seeing the whole child, (d) reflection on self as learner and teacher, and (e) identifying and working through anomalies.

Concerns About the Limitations of this Study

1. In this study, we had access only to teacher thought and practice as recorded by the teachers in the dialogue journals and on the H-T sheets. Had we maintained other records (fieldnotes, audio or video tapes), we might have different ideas about their teaching and learning.

2. Remarks made in journals suggest that class sessions had a significant influence on what the teachers thought about and addressed in their journals and H-T sheets. While syllabi are available to delineate topics that were discussed, we do not have clear audio tapes available to analyze the content of all class sessions. That data might have informed our understanding of the content and focus of journal entries.

3. Writing as a form of communication appeared to be more comfortable for some teachers than it was for others. One teacher, for example, noted that she used the journal only to record initial responses:

> I found a journal was a good way initially to respond to ideas and events, but was not an effective way for me to develop a detailed analysis of the total picture. For me, a journal is talk in a "stream of consciousness" format, with the depth usually reserved for face to face meetings at a later time when all of the ideas have been fitted together into a cohesive whole. Therefore, I probably did not show the depth of understanding in my writing that had occurred within my brain. Synthesis occurs in such ways as are difficult, or impossible, or too lengthy for me to convey in writing. My ideas exceed the speed of pen or processor and continue in a flux of fine tuning through discussions with others and through continued readings.
>
> Margaret 7/88

4. The data for this study was collected over only a five-week period. One teacher kept her journal for another month, and in so doing, provided a glimpse into the "aftermath" of the course. She used the last entry to talk about her teaching and her experiences and to synthesize new ideas from the course with her former practices to discover what she hoped to accomplish in the future. In this way, she appeared to make more intertextual ties than she seemed to do during the course. Her entries suggest that her thinking and work did not end with the last day of class, and they call attention to the fact that the design of this study did not allow for "simmering time."

Questions Raised By This Research

This preliminary study has raised a number of questions that need to be addressed in future research:

1. If an intertextual response style seems a desirable characteristic of teachers, as this preliminary study would seem to suggest, how is such a response style developed in teachers? Does response style change throughout a person's career? Or do some people "naturally" have a more reflective style than others? Is there some way to address/develop response style as part of the teacher training process?

2. Five weeks is long enough to see some change in teachers with an intertextual response style but not in teachers with a narrative response style. Would this change if the time period were longer?

3. Four of the teachers had a narrative response style while nine seemed to approach teaching in an intertextual manner.

4. What was the relationship between the professor's response style and teacher response style? Would a different instructor response style have affected teacher response style?

5. How can our schools be structured so as to support the development/continuation of an intertextural response style?

6. How much "simmering time" do teachers need? How long does it take to be able to see change in teachers' response styles? In their practices? In their belief systems?

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Figure 1

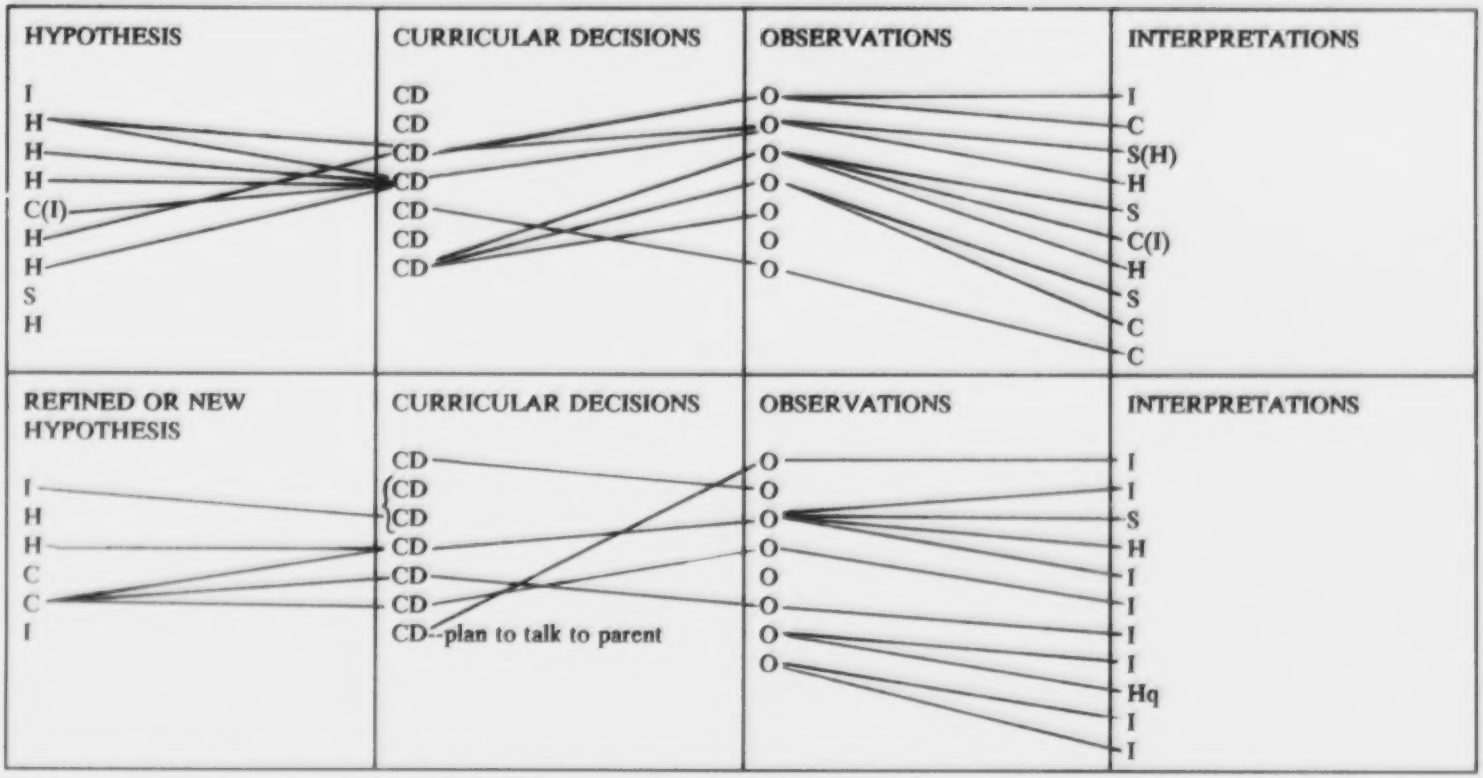
Hypothesis-Test Sheet

Name _____ Pg ____ of ____

HYPOTHESIS	CURRICULAR DECISIONS	OBSERVATIONS	INTERPRETATIONS
REFINED OR NEW HYPOTHESIS	CURRICULAR DECISIONS	OBSERVATIONS	INTERPRETATIONS

Appendix A

Name _____ **Pg 3 of 9**



Appendix B

Narrative Response Style

TEXT RELATED				TEACHING					PLANNING	
SUMMARIES	COMMENTS	CONNECTS TO CHILD	CONNECTS TO EXPERIENCE	TELLS	OBSERVES	INTERPRETS	HYPOTHESIZES	INSTRUCTS	BASED ON OBSERVATIONS	TEACHER-CENTERED
6/28/88	XX									
7/1/88	X			X	XX	XX	X			X
7/6/88	X	XXX		XXX	XXX	XX		X		
7/13/88				X	X	X	XX			
7/15/88		X				X	XX	X		
7/19/88				X	X	XX				
7/26/88				X	X	X	X			
7/29/88				X						

SELF AS LEARNER				TALK ABOUT . . .			COMMENTS/QUESTIONS TO PROFESSOR			ASIDES
UNEASINESS/ CONFIDENCE	BACKGROUND	REFLECTION	KNOWLEDGE	CLASS	JOURNAL	ASSESSMENT	CHILD-SPECIFIC	PROCEDURAL	REQUESTS FOR MATERIALS	ASIDES
1/28/88				X				X		X
2/1/88										
4/6/88								X		
4/13/88										
4/15/88										
4/19/88							X	X		X
4/26/88 X		XXX		X			X	X		X
4/28/88										

Interactive Response Style

TEXT RELATED				TEACHING					PLANNING	
SUMMARIZES	COMMENTS	CONNECTS TO CHILD	CONNECTS TO EXPERIENCE	TELLS	OBSERVES	INTERPRETS	HYPOTHESIZES	INSTRUCTS	BASED ON OBSERVATION	TEACHER-CENTERED
6/28/88		X		X						
6/30/88	XX						X			
7/5/88	X			X	XX	XX		X		X
7/6/88					X	X	X		X	X
7/8/88	X	XX			X					
7/12/88	X		X		X	X	X		X	
7/17/88	X				X	X	X			X
Tuesday										
Friday			X							
Sunday										
7/27/88					X					

SELF AS LEARNER				TALK ABOUT . . .			COMMENTS/QUESTIONS TO PROFESSOR			ASIDES
uneasiness/ confidence	background	reflection	knowledge	class	journal	assessment	child-specific	procedural	requests for materials	aides
6/28/88 X	XXX	X					X			
6/30/88 XX	X	XX	X	X				X		
7/5/88 X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X
7/6/88 X		X			X		X	X		XX
7/8/88 XXX		X	XX				XX	X		X
7/12/88 XX		X	X			X				
7/17/88		XXX	X		X			X		
Tuesday X										X
Friday		X								
Sunday		X		X						
4/27/88			X							XX

Appendix C

6/30/87

I've started to read Smith - well since I was taught to teach in a "programmatic" manner this is really going to be difficult -

I have always felt that I did not know much about reading and have sort of questioned my own philosophy about reading (in the past 24 hours. I have decided that I have none.)

To me it was all a mystery - learning & teaching.

7/2/87

I am a special ed. teacher and part of my frustration is from the fact that I've only had one methods course in reading (Reading Foundations) so I have really never had the chance to develop a philosophy about reading. I have been kind of "flourishing" in that area the past four years - trying to do different things & trying to see what works & what doesn't. But after my last reading in Smith - From Behind the Eyes - I realize how little I know about the whole process & I must admit in a way I am fascinated & full of questions. Are we maybe expecting to much to soon from children who are learning to read?

The children I work with come from troubled families in a low socio-economic level. All have had problems in language development in living (ex. in doing a farm unit very few knew the sounds the animal make or what kind of things come from a cow) so they did not really have the basis for understanding what the unit was about.

Aha - the importance of non-visual information - the need for prior knowledge - for experiences so that they can relate ------

7/6/

We have made reading a mysterious anxiety producing event for teachers, parents and especially children - we have set certain expectation without consideration for the individual emotionally or intellectually. We have taken our best resources or instructional tools (children's books, food packages, menus, newspaper, catalogs, etc.) and thrown them aside as to actually separate them from the whole reading & writing process and substituted them with a series of less than stimulating basal readers & worksheets into which we fit these children into groups. And God help the chile who cannot discriminate short vowel sounds but can read the book for he might stay in that book until he master those sounds - it's no wonder children hate the whole idea of reading if this is what they are exposed to day after day.

7/7/87

Diane,

I spent the weekend with Turnbill and Butler & really enjoyed the book. Gave me all sorts of things to think about - I still have lots of concerns about this whole "new" (to me) philosophy but it does not produce the anxiety it did last week. I accept the fact of reading & writing as a natural process (thanks for the article).

Of course, this course is sending my tutoring into absolute disarray. I guess I'm re-evaluating my role. Do I dare pick up a Phonics workbook ever again without feeling extreme guilt?

7/?/87

Written Conversation
Talking on Paper

Please may I have a copy of these

7/12/87

Read some of Frank Smith - he does make a lot of sense especially about teaching phonics - You know I am learning so much & am becoming so excited about the possibilities (even though I'm still having trouble in my daily sessions with Justin) yet I still wonder how this can be adapted to my program at school - I think it will have to be a step by step & very gradual process - might take years.

7/?/87

_____ - I already have some ideas of things I want to change & try. Enjoyed the article on reading like behavior - even went to the library and got Rhodes list of predictable books. I still really want to read more about children's literature. How about a suggestion?

The one thing I'll say for this class is that you've really made me think and look at myself as a teacher - you have also brought out a whole spectrum of emotions - talk about taking risks well here goes one - I get real angry sometimes when we discuss tests in class especially yesterday with WISC-R - I am the first full-time special needs person my school has ever had and I've worked very hard the past 4 years to try & build some credibility. When I present a child to APC (county office) for placement they don't want to hear my stories and for a lot of children I will write narratives, they want to see the numbers. I sometimes get the feeling you feel that we should not use any of these tests. Maybe I'm just being defensive!

The other side of this is that I'm thoroughly excited about teaching again - there's been such a change in my tutoring at home - Dan's making salt dough from a recipe. Jason is beginning to write a book using the pictures he draw or cars and I'm enjoying it - of course the parents are raising eyebrows -

7/?/87

It's getting late and I still have research to read but as usual I read one of your books first. Just finished Meek's book and it gave me more (just what I needed) to think about. Gave me some answers to a lot of my wondering about children's literature. (I think it's time to get the 5 cartons of children's books out from under the table and put them on the shelf where some of the ditto books now sit.)

One of the things I really got from her is her view of remedial reading classes and atmosphere - I really need to think about this and put it into something I can live with - I want to read her book again - In my mind I have been formulating some new ideas of what my LD program might look like this year, it'll be a good year for some gradual changes since my school will be going from just K-3rd grade to K-5th grade.

I also have decided that in order for me to meet any future goals I have to become certified in reading - I really don't know how you can get a Masters in Special Ed. with just one course in reading since it is one of the major issues we deal with. Thanks for all you encouragement & support.

7/?/87

For my paper I'm thinking about doing something on risk-taking & growing - like Justin I am learning how to take risks all over again - this year has not only been a hard one for me at school but also in my personal life. Summer school has been a wonderful experience for me in a lot of ways - and learning to take risks & reach out has been one of the most important and difficult.

7/26/87

Well, I sat down this morning to quickly write this letter to Justin's parents. Figured I do this all the time as part of my job - it would be not problem well 6 hours later and two trips to the grocery store (one for a candy bar, the other just to get out) I think I have finished if of course that's only the 'till you read it. The problem - I had no test scores to report - what I had to write had to come from me and the conclusions I had drawn over the past 4 weeks talk about taking risks and feeling open & exposed. Somewhere along the way I realized how much I have used test scores as a substitute for my own judgement. I realize that using the HT method I know more about Justin and what his problems are than if I had given him a Woodcock Achievement and just had grade eq. scores which in the long run really tell me very little. I really need to think about this some more.

Finished reading Smith last week - he's starting to get to me - I have just about stopped using flashcards with all my tutoring kids - we now use that time to share a couple of books sitting together on the couch in my family room - the kids love it and so do I (still struggling with a little guilt about this) I did have some problems with Smith when he talks about Remedial Reading. I still get really defensive & it's something I will need to work out in time.